## CHAPTER 13 PRELIMINARY PROJECT SCHEDULE

Following the initial siting study process, the project will move forward with an application under the Montana Major Facility Siting Act (MFSA), and will later involve environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), compliance and coordination with other Federal and State environmental and permitting laws and agencies, engineering design, material procurement, and construction. Assuming timely approval of the project within NorthWestern Energy, the process may begin in January of 2007, with a final in-service date in early February of 2013.

An early version of the project schedule was reviewed by NorthWestern, and several revisions were made to the lands and right of way portions.

The major tasks involved for project permitting, engineering and construction are detailed in Figure 13.1, and include:

- Montana Major Facilities Siting Act (MSFA) Application (1/29/2007 through 1/11/2008)
- State and Federal agency activities and coordination (7/02/2007 through 8/17/2007)
- Public scoping (8/20/2007 through 1/28/2007)
- Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) development (12/31/2007 through 9/4/2009)
- Joint Record of Decision, Grant of Right-of-Way on public lands (9/21/2009 through 12/18/2009)
- Construction surveys, engineering, specification and bidding (4/13/2009 through 7/1/2011)
- Agency Consultations; Biological surveys and Biological Assessment; Section 7 consultation, cultural surveys and cultural report (2/15/2007 through 7/23/2010)
- Landowner contact and private R-O-W acquisition (5/11/2009 through 6/4/2010)
- Material bidding and procurement (4/13/2009 though 12/30/2011)
- Line construction, tower assembly and erection (10/25/2010 through 2/1/2013)
- Substation construction (7/4/2011 through 12/28/2012)

The survey and engineering task of the project may be flexible to accelerate project completion. However, higher risk levels would be incurred the earlier survey and engineering is started before issue of the anticipated September 2009 Record of Decision (ROD). A certain level of risk is currently built into the preliminary schedule, with the engineering tasks beginning 8 months before the ROD. During the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement, significant adjustments to the project centerline as a result of public comment, appeals and agency requirements may necessitate additional survey work, tower redesign and layout adjustment, access road plan modification, specification and contract document adjustments, and other changes that would result in additional costs incurred by NWE. This may be a significant percentage of the engineering costs if the agencies feel major re-routing in response to environmental issues or public feedback is necessary to issue a Record of Decision. With a construction cost of approximately \$1.4 million per mile for the transmission line component of the project, changes that result in a longer line would also significantly affect the overall costs of the project. This additional work and project expense may actually push project completion past the anticipated December 2012 date.

## **Townsend to Midpoint 500kV Schedule** November 10, 2006 ID 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2012 201 J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F Text1 Task Name Start Finish Task 1 MFSA APPLICATION 1/29/07 1/11/08 MFSA APPLICATION 2 Prepare Agency Contact List 1/29/07 2/2/07 Prepare Agency Contact List 3 1.2 Agency Contact Letter 2/5/07 2/16/07 Agency Contact Letter 4 1.3 Agency Management Meetings 2/19/07 3/9/07 Agency Management Meetings 5 1.4 **Elected Officials Briefings** 3/12/07 3/30/07 **Elected Officials Briefings** 6 1.5 Mailing List 2/26/07 3/9/07 Mailing List 1.6 Newsletter #1 and Notices 3/12/07 3/23/07 Newsletter #1 and Notices 8 1.7 Public Scoping Meetings 4/2/07 4/13/07 **Public Scoping Meetings** 9 1.8 **Detailed Corridor Inventory** 5/18/07 2/19/07 Detailed Corridor Inventory 10 1.9 Impact Assessment / Mitigation Planning 6/22/07 5/21/07 Impact Assessment / Mitigation Planning 11 1.10 Route and Substation Site Comparison 7/20/07 6/25/07 Route and Substation Site Comparison 12 1.11 Prepare Draft MFSA Application 7/23/07 8/17/07 Prepare Draft MFSA Application 13 1.12 Northwestern Review 8/20/07 9/7/07 Northwestern Review 14 1.13 Prepare Final MFSA Application 10/5/07 9/10/07 Prepare Final MFSA Application 15 1.14 File MFSA 10/8/07 10/12/07 File MFSA 16 1.15 **DEQ Adequacy Review** 11/9/07 10/15/07 DEQ Adequacy Review 17 1.16 Provide Supplemental Materials 1/11/08 11/12/07 **Provide Supplemental Materials** 18 8/17/07 STATE / FED AGENCY ACTIVITIES Task 2 STATE / FED AGENCY ACTIVITIES 7/2/07 19 2.1 Pre-Application Meetings w BLM and FS 7/2/07 7/13/07 Pre-Application Meetings w BLM and FS 20 2.2 Prepare and File SF 299 and SUP 7/30/07 8/17/07 Prepare and File SF 299 and SUP 21 2.3 Prepare Prelim. Plan of Development 7/30/07 8/17/07 Prepare Prelim. Plan of Development 22 Task 3 SCOPING 8/20/07 12/28/07 SCOPING 23 3.1 Prepare Agency Contact List 8/20/07 8/31/07 Prepare Agency Contact List 24 3.2 Agency Contact Letter 9/3/07 9/14/07 Agency Contact Letter 25 3.3 Agency Management Updates 9/17/07 10/5/07 Agency Management Updates 26 3.4 **Update Mailing List** 9/17/07 10/5/07 **■**Update Mailing List 27 3.5 Establish ID Team / Meeting #1 10/8/07 10/19/07 Establish ID Team / Meeting #1 28 3.6 Prepare and Mail Newsletter #2 10/22/07 11/9/07 Prepare and Mail Newsletter #2 29 3.7 Federal Register NOI / Local Notices 11/9/07 10/22/07 Federal Register NOI / Local Notices 30 3.8 **Public Scoping Meetings** 11/26/07 12/14/07 Public Scoping Meetings 31 3.9 Prepare Scoping Report 12/17/07 12/28/07 Prepare Scoping Report 32 Task 4 PREPARE DRAFT EIS 12/31/07 2/20/09 PREPARE DRAFT EIS 33 Finalize Alternative Routes 4.1 12/31/07 1/18/08 Finalize Alternative Routes 34 4.2 Review and Update Inventory Data 1/21/08 3/28/08 Review and Update Inventory Data

35 4.3 Prepare CH 3 Sections 3/31/08 4/18/08 Prepare CH 3 Sections 36 Review / ID Team Meeting #2 4.4 4/21/08 5/9/08 Review / ID Team Meeting #2 37 4.5 Review and Finalize Impact Assessment 6/13/08 5/12/08 Review and Finalize Impact Assessment 38 Mitigation Planning 4.6 6/16/08 6/27/08 Mitigation Planning 39 4.7 Prepare CH 4 Sections 6/30/08 7/11/08 Prepare CH 4 Sections 40 4.8 Review / ID Team Meeting #3 7/14/08 8/1/08 Review / ID Team Meeting #3 41 4.9 Compare Alternatives 8/4/08 8/15/08 Compare Alternatives 42 4.10 Select Preferred Alternative Route 8/18/08 8/29/08 Select Preferred Alternative Route 43 4.11 Elected Official Briefing #2 9/1/08 9/12/08 **Elected Official Briefing #2** Task Progress **E** Milestone Summary Page 1 Figure 13.1 Project Schedule

## **Townsend to Midpoint 500kV Schedule** November 10, 2006 ID Text1 Task Name Start Finish 44 4.12 Prepare CH 1 - Purpose and Need 1/7/08 2/29/08 Prepare CH 1 - Purpose and Need 45 4.13 Prepare CH 2 - Prelim. Proposed Action and Alternatives 3/3/08 5/16/08 Prepare CH 2 - Prelim. Proposed Action and Alternatives 46 4.14 Finalize CH 2 9/1/08 9/12/08 Finalize CH 2 47 4.15 Prepare Preliminary Draft EIS 9/15/08 10/10/08 Prepare Preliminary Draft EIS 48 4.16 Review / ID Team Meeting #4 10/13/08 10/31/08 Review / ID Team Meeting #4 49 4.17 Prepare Camera-Ready Draft EIS 11/3/08 11/21/08 Prepare Camera-Ready Draft EIS 50 4.18 Agency Approval 11/24/08 12/5/08 Agency Approval 51 4.19 Federal Register NOA / Local Notices 12/8/08 12/19/08 Federal Register NOA / Local Notices 52 4.20 Print and Distribute Draft EIS 12/22/08 1/2/09 Print and Distribute Draft EIS 53 4.21 File Draft EIS with EPA 12/29/08 1/2/09 File Draft EIS with EPA 54 4.22 Public Comment Period 2/20/09 1/5/09 Public Comment Period 55 4.23 Formal Public Meetings 2/2/09 2/13/09 Formal Public Meetings 56 Task 5 PREPARE FINAL EIS 2/23/09 9/4/09 PREPARE FINAL EIS 57 5.1 Content Analysis of Comments 3/13/09 2/23/09 Content Analysis of Comments 58 5.2 Respond to Comments 3/16/09 4/10/09 Respond to Comments 59 5.3 Prepare Preliminary Final EIS 5/8/09 4/13/09 Prepare Preliminary Final EIS 60 5.4 Review / ID Team Meeting #5 5/11/09 5/29/09 Review / ID Team Meeting #5 61 5.5 Prepare Camera-Ready Final EIS 6/19/09 6/1/09 Prepare Camera-Ready Final EIS 62 5.6 Agency Approval 6/22/09 7/10/09 Agency Approval 63 5.7 Federal Register NOA / Local Notices 7/13/09 7/31/09 Federal Register NOA / Local Notices 64 5.8 Print and Distribute Final EIS 7/31/09 7/13/09 Print and Distribute Final EIS 65 5.9 File Final EIS with EPA 8/3/09 8/7/09 File Final EIS with EPA 66 5.10 **Public Comment Period** 8/10/09 9/4/09 Public Comment Period 67 Task 6 ROD / ROW GRANT / SUP / CC 9/21/09 12/18/09 ROD / ROW GRANT / SUP / CC 68 6.1 Joint ROD 10/16/09 9/21/09 Joint ROD 69 6.2 Federal Register Notice / Local Notices 10/19/09 11/6/09 Federal Register Notice / Local Notices 70 6.3 30-Day Appeal Period 11/9/09 11/20/09 30-Day Appeal Period 71 Grant of ROW / SUP / CC 6.4 11/23/09 12/18/09 Grant of ROW / SUP / CC 72 Task 7 Engineering 4/13/09 7/1/11 73 7.1 Lines 4/13/09 10/22/10 74 7.1.1 Aerial Survey 4/13/09 10/9/09 Aerial Survey 75 7.1.2 Legal Survey 3/12/10 8/3/09 **Legal Survey** 76 7.1.3 Design Criteria 4/13/09 7/31/09 77 7.1.4 Tower Design/Test 7/6/09 3/12/10 **Tower Design/Test** 78 7.1.5 Line Design 4/9/10 10/12/09 Line Design 79 7.1.6 Specifications 4/12/10 7/30/10 Specifications 80 7.1.7 Construction Bid/Procure 10/22/10 8/2/10 Construction Bid/Procure 81 7.2 7/1/11 Station 12/21/09 82 7.2.1 Survey 12/21/09 4/9/10 Survey 83 7.2.2 Design 4/12/10 12/17/10 Design 84 7.2.3 Specifications 12/20/10 4/8/11 -Specifications 85 7.2.4 Construction Bid/Procure 4/11/11 7/1/11 Construction Bid/Procure 86 Task 8 Consultations 3/19/07 7/23/10 Consultations

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